

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
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R 041738Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9580
INFO AMEMBASSY CONAKRY
AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY BISSAU
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY FREETOWN
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 11130

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, GV, FR, US
SUBJ: PATROL BOATS FOR GUINEA

REFS: A. STATE 80087. B. CONAKRY 362.

1. ON APRIL 3 WE REVIEWED WITH QUAI DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR FRANCOPHONE AFRICA, DE LA ROCHERE, THE QUESTION OF PATROL BOATS FOR GUINEA AND INFORMED HIM OF OUR NEGATIVE DECISION. WE TOLD HIM THAT DESPITE OUR NEGATIVE RESPONSE WE BELIEVED THAT THE GOG'S TURNING TO A WESTERN COUNTRY FOR THIS TYPE OF EQUIPMENT WAS A SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT AND THAT WE HOPED THE GOF WOULD BE ABLE TO RESPOND FAVORABLY IF IT WAS APPROACHED. (WE DID NOT REFER TO THE INFORMATION PROVIDED BY AMBASSADOR LEWIN--REF B.)

2. DE LA ROCHERE SAID THAT THE GOF HAD BEEN FORMALLY
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APPROACHED BY THE GOG TO SELL PATROL BOATS ABOUT A WEEK AGO (I.E., BEFORE WE GAVE OUR NEGATIVE RESPONSE.) HE AGREED THAT THIS WAS A MAJOR DEVELOPMENT--THE FIRST TIME IN TWENTY YEARS THAT THE GOG HAD TURNED TO FRANCE FOR MILITARY TYPE EQUIPMENT AND POTENTIALLY IMPORTANT IN REDUCING GUINEAN RELIANCE ON THE SOVIETS. HE SAID IT PROBABLE THE GOF WILL ACCEDE TO THE REQUEST.

WE DID NOT GET INTO THE QUESTION OF FINANCING THE SALE.

3. ON THE SUBJECT OF GISCARD'S VISIT TO GUINEA, HE SAID THAT A DATE IN JUNE WAS STILL A POSSIBILITY BUT BECOMING MORE AND MORE PROBLEMATIC AND A FALL VISIT NOW MORE LIKELY. THE REASONS FOR POSTPONING WERE TECHNICAL AND INVOLVED SUCH CONSIDERATIONS AS PHONE LINES TO HANDLE THE EIGHTY-SOME NEWSMEN WHO WANTED TO ACCOMPANY THE PRESIDENT. EVEN WITH A GREATLY REDUCED ENTOURAGE AND A PRESS POOLING ARRANGEMENT THERE ARE FORMIDABLE, LOGISTICAL PROBLEMS. THE GUINEANS, CONSCIOUS OF THE NEED TO MAKE THE VISIT A SUCCESS, ARE THE ONES SUGGESTING THAT THE VISIT BE DELAYED. THIS IS FINE WITH THE FRENCH; IT IS THEIR EXPERIENCE THAT THERE IS OFTEN A SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS BEFORE A MAJOR STATE VISIT AND, WITHIN REASONS, THEY ARE WILLING TO HAVE A LONG PRE-VISIT CLIMATE TO EXPLOIT.
HARTMAN

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